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Twentieth Century Latin American Architecture: a Network and a Digital Exhibition

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As representative of a joint research group, a network dedicated to the study of the Modern Latin American Architecture, the invitation to be in this symposium came in an important moment of discussion and decision regarding the use of digital tools and data bases within the activities of the group, altogether with the debate about their influence over the research needs and outputs. IT demonstrates a potential to support unforeseen frameworks of analysis and publicization of knowledge.

My first real approach to complex systems in IT happened in 2013 and 2014. I was the academic coordinator of a team at the library of the School of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo (FAU USP in Portuguese abbreviation) which realized the digitalization of the Brazilian architectural magazine *Acrópole*, published between 1938 and 1971 in the city of São Paulo. In the web site entitled “Revista Acropole” (<http://www.acropole.fau.usp.br/>). It is possible to research all the collection, and each of the 391 editions is entirely available. The website displays all issued magazines and its covers per one year. It is also possible, instead of looking at years or by issue, to search a specific content by word mining.

For instance, by searching the word “Japão” (or, Japan in Portuguese) some results will be displayed. There is a publication about the Japanese pavilion

designed by the architect Horiguchi Sutemi and built inside the Ibirapuera Park in Sao Paulo city in 1954, on the occasion of the 4th centennial of the foundation of the city of São Paulo. This, and other examples of forgotten or unknown facts of how architectural exchanges and the architectural culture in Brazil was shaped, demonstrate that this kind of database is an important tool for research, and would be especially useful for data mining analysis.

The *Observatório de Arquitetura Latinoamericana Contemporânea – ODALC* (Observatory of Contemporary Latin American Architecture) is a network of researchers of the University of São Paulo (Brazil), Universidad Nacional (Colombia) and Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (Mexico) dedicated to the study of contemporary Latin American architecture and cities since 2011.

In this research network we have started discussions about how to reinforce intercultural connexion within Latin America. So far, in Brazil, in Mexico and in Colombia every year or every two years, we organize symposiums and personal meetings. However, these are not enough for allowing an everyday exchange of information that would be required for a proper research network. But thanks to the cloud system and many other devices that support digital exchanges the network is seeking an operational way of continuity.

Among the various aims proposed during the regular meetings, two issues emerged as challenges related to potentialities of IT.

The first one is to build a more specific database according to the network’s research needs, exploiting IT resources to allow the circulation of internal documentation (due to the recording and use of copyrighted material). The system should permit a more intense interactivity among the members of the three countries. Data feeds, information exchange and sharing of work development should be done from and to any research center, with a more user friendly unfragmented platform than those available in the international research software system. Connecting different groups and allowing those who joined the network to contribute with

1. The architect Kuma Kengo in visit to São Paulo during the opening of the Japan House commented about the striking contrast between Horiguchi Sutemi’s delicate wooden architecture inside the Ibirapuera Park, placed side-by-side to the radical experiments of the Brazilian modern architecture (Andrea Urushima, editor’s note).

data and information are targets.

The creation of database and respective management, as a tool used to develop deeper reflections, analyzes and approaches is an important issue related to compatibility or the creation of a platform of easy performance where texts, photos, movies and drawings can be added.

Architectural historians and architects would know what to do with such documentation. This kind of database is really important and could be shared comprehensively. For example, when a Brazilian building data is available, Mexican colleagues and architects can analyze it with their own methodologies. Their approach of the same subject is clearly different from that of architects and architectural historians from Brazil. In the process of database construction, we would like to foresee the use of tools which do not need to be created, but something that already exists in an effective and flexible way, which could accommodate different types of data, including GIS information.

The second issue that emerged among the various aims proposed during the regular meetings, as a challenge related to potentialities of IT, was the design of a virtual/online exhibition on 20th century Architecture in Latin America.

It could be exhibited in museums, cultural centers, libraries and schools by means of large-format projections or in monitors or performed in lectures. It would be constantly remodeled and updated, according to new interpretations, the advances of the research and improvement of the available material for the show.

We would like to think of an architectural virtual exhibition based on the use of online systems that are flexible in the way we can choose or organize what we want to show and that allows the members of the group without any specially IT ability to update the data we collect. This type of system would allow us to work everyday and change the exhibition everyday by uploading and feeding new information. This information could be quickly presented in a digital mode that could sometimes be used for teaching in a school or simply as a virtual show in complement to an exposition in a museum or wherever else an exhibition could be displayed.

The exhibition would be organized with flexible contents, multilingual, shaped according to the occasion and the desired focus. It would be possible to select segments of the totality, according to chronological, thematic, typological, geographical or any other convenient criteria or curatorial con-

cerns.

Databases are permanent sources and serve as a basis for a virtual exhibition if creatively managed. We are specialists in contents, but not on the capabilities of IT. We must still understand its potentialities and develop best ways to present this information, but we still have an unclear idea on what works better with that.

In order to compare with traditional exhibition arrangements, may I talk about my experience as organizer and curator.

In Frankfurt in 1994, for a show at the Deutsches Architekturmuseum on contemporary architecture in Brazil, we have exhibited mainly printed photos taken by a Brazilian photographer, Cristiano Mascaro. We asked him to prepare special images for this exhibition.

Photos complemented by the displaying of other objects, such as books and blueprints of the buildings, represent a very conventional exhibition way, ever since architecture expositions has been organized in 20th century. A not so dark room exhibited a slide show, with the today surpassed and now forgotten 35mm slide projector of Ektachrome or Fujichrome positive images. Visitors could also look at prefabricated structure pieces that give an idea of the construction materials used in the buildings, and bring some of the “materiality” of the architecture (Fig.1).



Fig.1 Contemporary Architecture in Brazil exhibition: prefabricated piece and blueprints of architecture drawing exposed.

In 2012, in São Paulo, in the Centro Universitário Maríantonía, of our university, we curated the exhibition *Le Corbusier | South America | 1929*, featuring Le Corbusier's drawings and croquis that he made during his visit to South America in 1929.

Original drawings powerfully attract the attention of the audience, which could be partially explained by the “fetish” type of emotion caused by the view of the secrets hidden in the hand drafts of Le Corbusier.

If it we had displayed copies or reproductions, the impact would not be the same. We have showed truly works of art from the Le Corbusier Foundation archives in Paris, and compared with other schemes published in his book *Précisions*. Five houses sketched in the drawings were materialized in scale models. We tried to be didactic and to give an idea of the relevance of the original drawings with explanations. As croquis and models are very important elements in architectural exhibitions, we also included the sketches of a little known planned personal library in São Paulo which was not built, and we made a tridimensional model from tentative drafts (Fig.2).

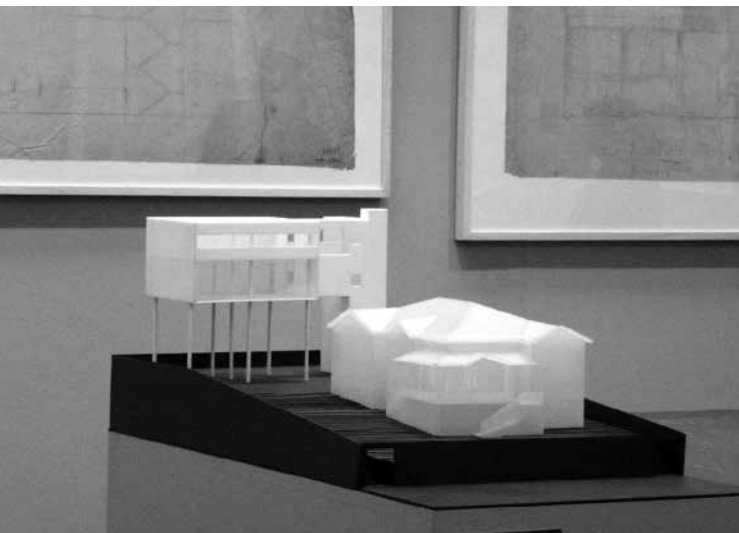


Fig.2 Le Corbusier | South America | 1929 exhibition at the Centro Universitário Maríantonio, São Paulo, 2012. Paulo Prado's library original sketches by Le Corbusier behind the scale model made after these drawings.

We also counted with other devices which made available the displaying of videos. This was a very successful exhibition, specially among architects.

Traditional exhibitions can be quite expensive, and this could be represented by the exhibition *Latin America in Construction 1955-1980*, organized in 2015 at the MOMA – Museum of Modern Art New York. That was a type of show that is hardly affordable in Latin America and maybe wherever else. Perhaps, some of you have visited this exhibition: images, videos, movies and newly scale models and original drawings (again the “fetish”). Unique drawings that came from all over Latin American archives, including schemes, models and

photos of the early capital of Brazil, Brasília; and very expensive maquettes that cannot be transported so easily to other venues.

In contrast, for thinking about affordability, democratic and easily accessible expositions, digital exhibitions are a good possibility that avoids the need to deal with the “fetish” of original drawings, which insurance and handling fees are extremely expensive. Following this trend of a more accessible form of exhibition, since last October we started discussions on how to conceive this kind of virtual show and it is now a work in progress.

Instead of explaining the concept, I will try to show the proposition that structure our tentative concept for the 20th Century Latin American Architecture exposition. We have framed the collection of data following three topics with a multicultural approach, firstly for bilingual exchanges between the Portuguese and Spanish speaking communities, and to be expanded to other languages. The three topics are:

- Discourses
- Poetics
- Territory and Landscape

We have, as great background, the ethos or the question of identity, as a reason to organize this exhibition. The ethos as a “set of traits and modes of behavior that make up the character or identity of a person or a community”, according to the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* (Real Academia Española, our translation) or the “the distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature, or guiding beliefs of a person, group, or institution”, following the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. These three topics are like superimposed layers. But we are still uncertain about the design behind the scheme. Are they flat layers, or are they special layers, meaning, 3D layers that we could think of linking the contents of the exhibition through 3D layers? What connects these is not only a superposition of layers, since we must consider the need to interlace these three topics; what is behind these issues is the time line. It was very interesting when Prof. Hara showed the time line rule which demonstrated that there is a way to create this type of structure we are thinking. Maybe there is a way to create this connection information science specialists could help us to think about this time line and the special relation between time and contents. This would help in imagining the layers not as flat layers but thick ones or massive volumes where territory, po-

etics and discourses are intertwined, thorough the linkage with the dimension of time, which is very important.

Just for an idea of what I'm talking about, I selected a sample of images coming from one of these topics to show you what we want to create. For example, one possible approach would be framed by a subtitle of a chapter: "Living collectively and production". In this section, we could show a mining company town – Sewell, in Chile, from the early 20th century –, that are listed as UNESCO World Heritage Monument (Fig.3), as well as we could present Vila Serra do Navio, another mining company town of mid-20th century designed for the Brazilian Amazonia, where we would also include the architectural early drawings and the photos of the town as built.



Fig.3 Mining town of Sewell, Chile, founded early 20th century.

Other examples are the social housing complex designed by Carlos Raúl Villanueva in Venezuela (Fig.4), or another housing projects, like this one in Brazil designed by Affonso Eduardo Reidy (Fig.5). For Caracas or Rio de Janeiro, they are modern urban proposals surrounded by traditional city configurations, rising behind the favelas (slums). In the exhibition we have to show and explain what it means and the context of its construction. We have to show the existing connections between the apparition of this type of architecture and urban proposals concerning the topics of Poetics, Discourses, Territory and Landscape, tuned to a time line.

Another sample chapter would be "To teach, to research and to emancipate", in this case focused on campuses and university cities.

This 1927's campus of the Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María in Valparaíso, Chile, illustrates the early symbolic appropriation of university imagery in Latin America (Fig.6) with traditional

type of architecture and urbanism, following a European type of university arrangement.



Fig.4 23 de Enero Housing complex, Caracas, Venezuela, 1954-1967, designed by Carlos Raúl Villanueva and team.



Fig.5 Pedregulho Housing Complex, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1947, designed by Affonso Eduardo Reidy and team.

That one heavily contrasts to a more modern system of urban plan and architecture, as we can see in this amazing Universidad Central de Venezuela university city in Caracas, designed in mid-20th century by Carlos Raúl Villanueva, and listed as an UNESCO World Heritage (Fig.7). In our exhibition we have to show and explain what is the meaning of this masterpiece of Latin America architecture and try to digest the links that existed, for example, between the Venezuelan case with another UNESCO World Heritage case that is the UNAM university city in Mexico D.F. (Fig.8), in order to understand how outstanding development had such typologies in the Latin American context.

On the other hand, we have another kind of university campus that is not really an ordinary campus, and most of the people don't understand that it is a campus. Even in the MoMA exhibition this was not clearly explained. However, for us we consider that the Ciudad Abierta de Ritoque (Ritoque Open City) is an experimental typology of campus in Chile. Ciudad Abierta is a field for developmen-



Figure 6 – Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, city of Valparaíso, Chile, 1927, designed by Smith Solar & Smith Miller.



Fig.7 City University of Universidad Central de Venezuela. Aula Magna building, 1954, by Carlos Raúl Villanueva and team.



Fig.8 University City of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Cosmic Rays Pavilion by Jorge Gonzalez Reyna and Félix Candela (left), and Medicine School building, by Roberto Álvarez Espinoza, Pedro Ramírez Vázquez and Ramón Torres.



Fig.9 Open City of Ritoque of the Catholic University of Valparaíso, Viñas del Mar, Chile, built from 1971.

tal architecture and landscape founded in 1971, co-operatively organized by architects, artists, writers, poets and alumni at the Design and Architecture School in the Catholic University of Valparaíso. The cooperative has acquired 270 hectares of land located 16 kilometers to the north of Valparaíso city, composed of a broad coastline spotted with wetlands and dunes and sheltered by hills, which is permanently transformed into an open partially habited place, through the intervention of students and professors. This is an experimental campus in the sense that all involved people can elaborate their own spaces, architecture, objects, landscape and land art as in practical workshops and create this experimental territory. In the slides we're looking to objects, but in fact is much more than objects in an almost desert-like scenery (Fig.9).

The relation between these varied conceptions of university cities makes us want to understand the questions of identity or of places, ideas of a different way of teaching and learning, ideas of an experimental campus and other experiences such as in the cases of universities in Caracas, in Mexico or in Valparaíso.

Another chapter of our planned virtual exhibition would deal with a theme incarnated by three words: spirit, body and soul. One sub-chapter could be titled "Heal the Spirit", with the inclusion of early 20th and mid-century theatres and movie theatres. An outstanding sample of this architecture typology is theaters related to immigration, such as the one with German background in the city of Blumenau, in Brazil (Fig.10).



Fig.10 Carlos Gomes Theater, city of Blumenau, state of Santa Catarina, Brazil.

Since immigration is a big issue, we could richly inform a whole debate through the History of Architecture. By linking the spiritual role of theaters to society and the topic of immigration, it would be possible to relate to other works through this

online or digital system, since we could reorganize because all this information would be registered in a database. Theaters and cinema serve the purpose of taking care of spirit (and body) as much as other types of buildings, as soccer stadiums. For example, the Estádio Centenário was the stadium that sheltered the first Soccer World Cup in 1930 in Montevideo, and it still exists (Fig.11), or other examples among the first stadiums in Brazil, such as the Estádio Mario Pessoa in Ilhéus, Brazil, of early 1940s.



Fig.11 Centenario Stadium, Montevideo, Uruguay, 1950, designed by Julio Scasso. Postcard dated 1950.

If we consider a section themed as “Heal the Body”, we would be able to include hospitals that would support in understanding health systems through an observation of very early buildings of the 1930s, such as sanatoriums dedicated to tuberculosis rehabilitation or spas dedicated to provide health facilities. In the case of Brazil, modern types of spas such as this in Águas de Lindoia (Fig.12).



Fig.12 Municipal SPA of the city of Águas de Lindoia, state of São Paulo, Brazil, 1953, designed by Oswaldo Bratke.

In the section “Bless the Soul”, we would include churches and chapels, such as the World Heritage Monument by Oscar Niemeyer in Belo Horizonte (built 1939) or other similar buildings built all over Latin America, as the Cathedral of Chillán,

designed by Hernán Larraín Errázuriz in Chile (built 1943). This peculiar vaulted structures that I think Niemeyer originally made up and then became a Latin American distinguishing trait for religious buildings, and is found in several other cases.

Or the Susana Soca Chapel, in Uruguay, designed by Antonio Bonet in 1959, a Spanish architect that worked in South America. Again although we include churches in a section about caring of the soul, we could easily connect the immigrant role in shaping the Latin American architecture, through looking at the immigration of architects from Spain, such as Antonio Bonet and those from Germany working in the south of Brazil or other with German background architects such as Niemeyer or Jesus Tenreiro Degwitz in Venezuela, which San José Benedictin Abbey, in the outskirts of the city of Güigüe, Venezuela (built 1984-1991) is praised as a late 20th century religious masterpiece.

There is a proposal to list the buildings by the Uruguayan Eladio Dieste as UNESCO World Heritage Monument, as this church in Atlántida, nearby Montevideo (Fig. 13). We have soul caring structures of all kinds, masterpieces as the Church of Santísima Trinidad de las Condes, Santiago built 1962) by the clergyman and architect Gabriel Guarda in Santiago, the Mausoleum in the Northern Cemetery, Montevideo, Uruguay (built 1960-1962), designed by Nelson Bayardo. or the Pantheon Chapel, city of Jungapeo, state of Michoacán, México (1984), designed by Carlos Mijares Bracho. The latter, as Dieste’s ones, could interlace the section of “Bless the Soul” with another one chapter which makes reference to the use of bricks, and the poetic of the bricklaying, or approaching to a vision of poetics and architectural tectonics.

Other chapter would be titled “Humanized Landscapes”, having as smart samples Luis Barragán and his Mexico City’s El Pedregal urbanization or the Brazilian Roberto Burle Marx, the foremost modern landscape architect, with proposals in Brazil and in Venezuela.

One of Burle Marx’s iconic projects is the Flamengo Park in Rio de Janeiro, a worldwide known city for its beautiful beaches. These are wonderful places and they look so natural that no one believes that there existed no beach in Rio de Janeiro before the first quarter of the 20th century. (Fig.14). Burle Marx created some of the beaches or treated the seafront for the pleasure of the people. In the Flamengo Park a sand seashore was devised by the landscape architect and it exotically

became an archetype of Rio de Janeiro's landscape. However this is an entirely man made place. In fact, Burle Marx played the role of a "god" creating an unnatural landscape.



Fig.13 Church of the Parish of Cristo Obrero, resort town of Atlantida, Uruguay, 1958, designed by Eladio Dieste.



Fig.14 Flamengo Park, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, designed by Roberto Burle Marx and team, 1961-1965.

The final example (among many we could show) from a larger and yet imprecise whole of an exposition proposal is a chapter entitled "Change Surfaces". It can be exemplified by the Panama Canal (Fig.15), a waterway connecting Pacific and Atlantic oceans (built 1904-1914), which is an absolute amazing structure from the second decade of the past century. It is the material expression of how human actions have played with and over the nature. It represents a huge territorial intervention with all the big ships crossing from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean or vice-versa. Navigating it, we can see US Military infrastructure and other facilities built alongside this structure.

Hydroelectrics are other large human undertaking in nature. These are such big impacting action that we can see their effects in Google Earth image

shots (Fig.16). They are also part of the 20th century human intervention in Latin America represented by the construction of big infrastructures.

A sample of Discourses Topic and Ethos

Discourses are a dimension to explore as a topic in the exposition. This is mainly a comprehension of articles, essays and manifestos as repositories of the characteristics to outline what Latin America would be. Insofar the main database to create is written documents.



Fig.15 Canal of Panama, Miraflores lock.



Fig.16 Itaipu Dam, Foz do Iguaçu region, Brazil and Paraguay, 1971-1984.

An important issue along the first decades of last century was the search of a proper architectural identity among active architects in countries like Argentina, Brazil, México or Peru. This movement was known as Neocolonial. An intense interchange happened within the Latin American architects concerning a creation of an own style, based on 16th to 18th century architecture forms and shapes, as sources and solutions for this identity research.

For instance, from the pages of the Brazilian

manifesto of the Neocolonial style (“A Arte Tradicional no Brasil - A Casa e o Tempo”, “The traditional Art in Brazil — the House and the Time”), we could try to understand or pick up the main statements using a very simple and manual way for a detailed examination: taking a pen or a pencil and start underlining a paper copy. But we could also try some more improved methods of analysis by using text mining softwares. In this way we can show the ideas behind the words, we show the ideological narratives of architecture, we connect their ideas to the kind of architecture that were produced.

We could expand the written narratives to built architectural narratives, that is, devise an interpretation looking to the changes of concepts and ideas in a time line intertwining words and buildings. We could name this switch embodied in three terms suggesting transformations: “From the Neocolonial to the Modern until Postmodern.”

Lucio Costa, by the construction of Neocolonial houses, as this built in 1924 (Fig.17), became one authority of the style, or one of the main architects to propel this change from the Beaux-Arts tradition to a Neocolonial type of architecture, until his conversion to the Modern Architecture early 1930s, championing Le Corbusier’s ideals.

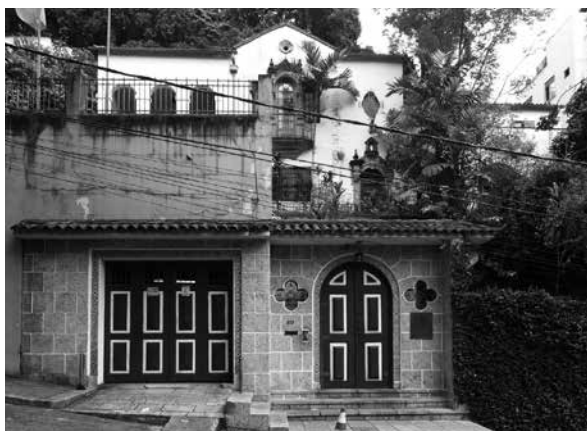


Fig.17 Neocolonial style house designed by Lucio Costa, 1924.

But even in his wake to modern concepts, he designed a hotel in which coexisted tradition and modernity. One of the most important issues in Latin America is that architectural modernity and tradition have developed in close relationship. Lucio Costa won the competition to the urban plan of Brasilia in 1957 (a worldwide recognized sample of modern planning), but in the 1980s he built a house in Amazonia with very traditional mood (Fig.18). Thus, 20 years after Brasilia was designed, he designed a house that includes several traditional fea-

tures, making it look like a paradox in Latin America Architecture: the co-occurrence of modern and the traditional attitudes in the same architects.



Fig.18 House for Thiago de Mello, town of Barreirinha, state of Amazonas, Brazil, 1980s, designed by Lucio Costa.

Luis Barragán, who is reputable Mexican most admired architect, and a Pritzker Prize awarded, started his career designing Neocolonial style architecture, as we can see in some of his houses of the late 1920s, as the neocolonial style house for Efraín Gustavo Luna, in the city of Guadalajara, Mexico (built 1928). Then he turned into modern architecture, and the most celebrated Barragán’s architecture is those known for its color schemes and geometries, as the famous Gilardi House in Mexico City (built 1976).

Explaining Architecture

Another possibility to explain how architectural proposals are generated could be demonstrated by using computer animation. This is a much more sophisticated resource of which we are really attracted, but not yet within our reach due to limited knowledge on IT realm. To make a good explanation of design method in Architecture and Planning depends on a deep understanding of creative processes and its constraints. However, to translate such interpretations to a more pedagogical means is a bigger challenge, considering that an exposition is in general destined to non-specialists, lay people to whom an exhibition must make things clear. So, computer animation is not an end, but a means to achieve didactic goals. In a show on 20th Century Latin American Architecture, animation would be extremely useful, considering its virtual format and as a step ahead of showing only drawings, scale

models and photos.

For now, we are limited to some timid trials, exploring to the limit presentation programs like Power Point, before rehearsing video programs or other devices which are not yet under our immediate agenda.

For instance, we have a preparatory presentation trial just have a slight idea about. This Power Point is about an ensemble of school and religious retreat in Antofagasta, Chile. Besides aesthetic and constructive characteristics, this is an approach based on the geographical and multi-climatic features of Latin America. We try to underline some issues and problems that emerged in the process of finding solution adequate to specific ecoclimates. Both the cities of São Paulo and Antofagasta are under the Tropic of Capricorn latitude. But while the Brazilian city has a humid tropics condition, the Chilean city is at the shore of the Pacific Ocean in a desert region. Cities under the same latitude does not mean the architectural and urban solutions are the same. By showing Google Earth images, the architects' sketches, plans, sections and photos, we try to explain in a very limited animation such ideas behind the architectural and landscape proposals.

The idea of creating this database is also to allow to approach and superimpose the architects sketches in the places and start to explain their solutions, the built architecture, through locating them in time and space. IT technologies would be of incremental support.

A PREZI structure

This virtual exhibition is being conceived and prepared together with colleagues in Colombia who proposed the application of the PREZI software. In a recently trial sample produced they have been thinking of a composition which is not based on a flat imagery system, but a perspective represented in a tridimensional structure. Even if unfinished, they selected drawings and images, and created axis of proximity according to some ideas and concepts. We would like to explore the possibilities of connections and relations that are possible to evoke, even if we still have no clear idea of the capacity of PREZI to respond to all the flexibility that we want to organize this kind of exhibition.

2. Prezi is a web-based presentation software, created in Hungary. This freedom of movement enables "conversational presenting," a presentation style in which presentations follow the flow of dialogue, instead of vice-versa. The word Prezi is the short form of "presentation" in Hungarian (Andrea Urushima, editor's note).

Questions and Comments

(Pedro BRANCANTE) How to make people use PREZI by overcoming the challenge of language barriers or cultural differences in the process of establishing such complex and rich information system? Is it possible to design it in a way that people from different cultures and different regions will be able to use and access it, in order to learn more about Latin America Architecture?

(Hugo SEGAWA) This is one very important issue. We do not have an answer now. What we have been preparing is a kind of online structure that could be presented in the museum, or be used in a classroom, or during a seminar. Of course, each of these occasions is different. However, this is not an open structure (I mean, as Wikipedia), but we could eventually create and establish a version for academic use, and another for non-specialists, with an approach which is more open, multi-cultural and didactical with the aim of explaining Latin-American architecture for non-architects, and maybe create a version more sophisticated to present other bold interpretations on Latin American Architecture. The main issue is that we do not have yet a database, a main structure that shelters all this data, that once created would allow us to pick what we want to show according to the administrator or the user, and according to the target of the presentation. So, we must first build this database, this structure that would allow Mexican colleagues in a seminar, or wherever else, organize samples and selections of works that they want to show in a seminar or exhibition. First, we must create an open structure in the sense that the members of this joint research could use it and upload/update information. Following this proposed database main structure, at every time Colombian colleagues would be able to upload some new information that was unknown and this new information could be used for another analyses. We would like to create a very open database in this way but I am not sure yet if this is possible, and if we would be able to use this in this way. This is a problem that we must still find the solution.

(Gaia CAMELLINO) I understand that the proposal of the Latin American Virtual Exhibition is a kind of response, an answer to the MoMA exhibition that tends to historically level and overlook the specificities of certain experiences. Of course, one of the limits in some way of traditional exhibi-

tions is that we have some rigid, mandatory paths and is not open to different levels of interpretation. One of the great values of the virtual exhibition is that you can somehow select how to interrogate the exhibition and in your presentation emerged the plurality of categories from typology, to authors, methods of constructions, techniques, scales, etc. Are these levels of the virtual exhibition open to the general public? Could this virtual exhibition be interrogated through these different levels of analyses? What is your idea about this?

(Hugo SEGAWA) Virtual information overwhelms us, we have an overdose of information. The task of researchers is to organize ideas. The database is thought to be an open structure that anyone could see. Of course, we have a lot of materials and then what can we do with this? Collections? A collector collects for collections from varied reasons. We have reasons to collect information, this is the foundation of databases, this is what Prof. Hara showed us: there are infinite possibilities. In academia we collect them to make interpretations. How open would this need to be is a different question. Maybe new researchers from Argentina or Chile can come and join us, but they are entering this database in the middle of the way. It is ready, an incredible database yet to be open to the general public.

(Corinne TIRY-ONO) You ended your last sentence with the expression of general public with the suggestion that this kind of exhibition might not be for it. In fact, usually architectural exhibitions are very difficult to understand for the general public as they are very professional kind of documents (drawings, plans, sections), if you are not an architectural student or architect yourself those documents are very difficultly to understand and to read. I think that what you offer is the possibility to manipulate documents in order to make people understand why a building has such shape, or why it implemented in that way within that the landscape and so on. This is a very powerful advantage of the IT as a kind of didactic tool for the general public in terms of architecture.

(Hugo SEGAWA) I think you are right. We are worried about this, this is one of the concerns. I showed the exhibitions we organized in Frankfurt and the one with Le Corbusier's drawings, and we are aware that the great part of the public were specialists, but of course we think that we have to open them and this is one of our concerns.

IMAGE CREDITS

Figure 11, unknown photographer, Hugo Segawa archives.

Figure 16 is a printscreen from Google Earth.

All other images by Hugo Segawa.